GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1887
ANSWERED ON:03.08.2001
COMPLAINTS AGAINST T.V. CHANNELS
KAMBALAPADU E. KRISHNAMURTHY

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether major TV Channels like Star TV, Sony, ESPN etc., have been issued notices under MRTPC for their alleged restrictive trade practices by hiking subscribers fees frequently and arbitrarily;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken/being taken by the Government to protect the viewer interests?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a) & (b): The Monopolies & Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTPC) has informed that they have received complaints against major TV Channels alleging restrictive trade practices resulting in restriction of competition, manipulation of prices etc. The details provided by MRTPC are annexed.

(c): The existence of a large number of competing channels itself ensures protection of viewer interest which is further buttressed by existence of laws such as the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act and the Consumer Protection Act in addition to the MRTP Act.

ANNEXURE

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) & (b) OF LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1887 FOR ANSWER ON 3.8.2001.

The details of the sub-judice complaints are as follows: -

1. Restrictive Trade Practices Enquiry (RTPE) 02/2001

This is an application / complaint filed by Shri Nirmal Jain against Indusind Media & Communication Ltd. and six other television networks under Section 12-A and 10 (a)
(i) of MRTP Act, 1969. It is alleged that the trade practices adopted by the respondents has the effect of preventing, distorting and restricting competition, manipulation of prices and indulging in various restrictive, unfair and monopolistic trade practices.

The matter is sub-judice. Notices under Section 10 (a)
(i) and 12-A of MRTP Act, 1969 have been issued to seven respondents namely Indusind Media & Communication Ltd. News Television (India) Ltd, Sony Entertainment Television (India) Ltd, Turnor International (India) Pvt. Ltd, Discovery Communications India Ltd., ESPN Software India Ltd & Modi Entertainment Network Ltd and the matter is listed before the Bench on 23-.08-2001 for consideration.

2. Restrictive Trade Practices Enquiry (RTPE) 3/2001

This is an application/complaint by Noida Network System Pvt. Ltd. against Star TV and another under Section 12-A and 10 (a)
(i) of MRTP Act, 1969. It is alleged that the respondents are increasing the subscriber fees frequently and arbitrarily, resorting to discriminatory prices and similar other restrictive and unfair trade practices.

The matter is sub-judice. Notice under Section 10 (a)
(i) and 12-A of MRTP Act, 1969 have been issued to the respondents namely Star TV & News Television (India) Ltd. and the matter is listed before the Bench on 13.08.2001 for consideration of the interim application filed by the applicant/ complainant.

3. Restrictive Trade Practices Enquiry (RTPE) 26/2001

This is an application/ complaint by Jammu Communications Networks Pvt. Ltd. against Star TV and another under Section 12-A and 10 (a)
(i) of MRTP Act, 1969. It is alleged that the respondent are increasing the subscriber fees frequently and arbitrarily, resorting to

discriminatory prices and similar other restrictive and unfair trade practices.

The matter is sub-judice. Notice under Section 10 (a)
(i) and 12-A of MRTP Act, 1969 have beenissued to the respondents namely Star TV & News Television India Ltd and the same is listed before the Bench on 27.09.2001 for consideration of the interim application filed by the applicant/complainant.

4. Restrictive Trade Practices Enquiry (RTPE) 76/1998

This is a complaint by Indusind Media & Communications Pvt. Ltd. against El Zee Television Pvt. Ltd and four others under Section 10 (a)
(iv) of the Act. It is alleged that the respondents are increasing prices arbitrarily and indulging a various restrictive and monopolistic trade practices.

The matter is sub-judice and it is listed before the Bench on 06.09.2001 for settlement of issues.